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New York

Chairman: Mr. González ..... (Chile)

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda items 64, 65 and 67 to 85 (*continued*)

Thematic discussion on item subjects; introduction and consideration of all draft resolutions submitted under all disarmament and international security items

Mr. Palihakkara (Sri Lanka): My delegation has the honour to introduce the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/54/L.22, on the subject of prevention of an arms race in outer space, on behalf of the following sponsors: Algeria, Bangladesh, Brunei Darussalam, Chile, China, Cuba, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Egypt, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Nigeria, Pakistan, the Russian Federation, the Sudan and Sri Lanka.

I do not wish to elaborate at great length on the topicality and importance of the subject. Many delegations have already done that in the general debate. They have urged multilateral work on this critical issue, which is also on the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva as an item deserving priority consideration.

Here I wish to place on record my delegation's gratitude to the co-initiator of this draft resolution, the delegation of Egypt, for their cooperation, support and valuable advice in carrying out consultations and formulating the text.

This year's draft resolution has broad-based support. We consider this cross-regional support a measure of the importance the international community attaches to the question and to actualizing the will of all member States to do multilateral work on this issue.

I will not attempt to give an extensive description of the substance of the preamble and the operative parts of the draft. Suffice it to mention here that the substance of the text, while closely following the provisions of resolution 53/76, adopted last year, is an update that was drafted in a careful manner based on wide-ranging consultations that my delegation and our Egyptian colleagues have undertaken with the other sponsors and other interested delegations.

The draft resolution as a whole is formulated in a forward looking manner, not in a retrospective sense. Our main objective is to reaffirm principles that enjoy general support and to make provision for some meaningful work next year in the Conference on Disarmament, where there appear to be prospects for developing a consensus to establish a subsidiary body to undertake some meaningful multilateral work. We hope that the draft resolution with its present wording will enable all delegations to participate in that consensus.

We commend the draft resolution for adoption by the Committee.

Mr. Pearson (New Zealand): I have the honour to introduce the draft resolution entitled "Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: the need for a new agenda", contained in document A/C.1/54/L.18. I do so on behalf of Benin, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Fiji, Ghana, Grenada, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Ireland,

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Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mali, Mexico, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Peru, the Philippines, Samoa, San Marino, Sierra Leone, the Solomon Islands, South Africa, Swaziland, Sweden, Thailand, Togo, Uganda, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

The purpose of this draft resolution is simple and transparent: to reinvigorate the way in which we approach the nuclear disarmament agenda. Its intention is to galvanize the international community in a concerted push to move forward in realistic and achievable steps, so that we can work to eradicate nuclear weapons once and for all. We see it as the duty and obligation of all members of the United Nations to address this crucial imperative.

The draft resolution outlines the contours for moving forward. It does not presume to supplant other draft resolutions on nuclear disarmament before this Committee. Rather, its purpose is to offer a comprehensive way forward, contingent on an unequivocal undertaking to speed up the pace of engagement.

This draft resolution addresses the task before us in the round. It is not discriminatory in approach, as has been claimed. It calls for steps to be taken appropriately by the five nuclear-weapon States that possess the largest arsenals. It calls upon the nuclear-capable States that are not parties to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) to renounce the nuclear-weapons option and adhere to the non-proliferation regime unconditionally and without delay. It also calls upon the non-nuclear-weapon States to take a considerable number of steps.

This draft resolution, therefore, offers an all-inclusive approach. Its goal is to engage the international community as a whole in underpinning the steps along the way that we all, collectively, need to take in the fulfilment of our obligations and responsibilities. And, importantly, it addresses the considerable inventory of unfinished business in disarmament. In this context, it is both inclusive and comprehensive.

The draft resolution focuses on the need to use existing mechanisms and approaches. It provides a balance between bilateral, plurilateral and multilateral approaches, each of which, undeniably, must be pursued to achieve nuclear disarmament. It does not attempt to multilateralize the ongoing bilateral process, but it recognizes that as this process evolves further others will need to engage along the way.

The new agenda co-sponsors believe that the approach set out in this draft resolution offers a decisive way to proceed, if we are to achieve the consensus of eliminating these weapons.

An overriding concern we have in putting forward this draft resolution is the reality that the nuclear disarmament process is faltering, if not stalled. We believe that what it needs is a kick start. The perceived benefits and the promise that came with the end of the cold war seem to have eluded us. As a consequence, we are not delivering as fast as we could or should be on nuclear disarmament.

The nuclear tests in South Asia and subsequent talk of developing a nuclear deterrent have changed the nuclear architecture. Our draft resolution addresses this development, along with the need for universal adherence to the NPT. Concepts of nuclear deterrence are being expanded, or at least becoming more ambiguous. The retention of nuclear weapons is being re-rationalized for potential use against biological and chemical weapons attack. There are other challenges being pursued in missile proliferation and missile defence.

Complacency has crept into the nuclear agenda. The political agenda, more often than not, has followed rather than led public expectations on disarmament. But we sense that complacency may have permeated civil society thinking as well as the political process itself.

It is this sense of real concern and frustration that has driven the new agenda process. It is an approach that is underwritten by the provisions of the NPT and, in particular, its basic bargain to forgo the nuclear-weapons option in return for the undertaking to work for the elimination of these weapons, provisions that we take very seriously.

The NPT carries an explicit obligation to pursue the elimination of these weapons, and it calls for the cooperation of all States in the attainment of this objective. It follows, then, that non-nuclear-weapon States have both the right and the responsibility to pursue this obligation.

When the NPT was extended indefinitely in 1995, the indefinite retention of nuclear weapons was not sanctioned. On the contrary, the NPT makes another important distinction — progress on nuclear disarmament is not contingent on progress on conventional disarmament. Finally, it is inherent in a Treaty based on mutual obligations that no one group of States can determine

independently the pace at which the obligations of that Treaty are implemented.

Those are the legal imperatives before us. Let me now touch on the political imperatives of the new agenda draft resolution.

The United States and the Russian Federation reject categorically any multilateralization of the START process. We do not dispute that, nor is this initiative calling for multilateralization of this important initiative. We welcome and endorse it, but we do see the process evolving into plurilateral engagement, and in turn eventually becoming multilateral and universal.

Our draft resolution is balanced in another important respect. It acknowledges and welcomes disarmament that is already being pursued by some nuclear-weapon States. Most important in this context is the trilateral initiative between the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the United States and the Russian Federation. We hope this initiative can be broadened and expanded in the future. We also acknowledge unilateral measures, such as those of the United Kingdom and France.

But let us remind ourselves also of another political reality. Nuclear weapons must not, in the new millennium, become an inevitable feature of our society. The fact that they have not been used for 50 years does not mean that the risks they carry are lessened. The longer we retain them, the greater the temptation for others to acquire them. Increasingly, nuclear weapons will become an even greater liability as inventories age and exceed their design life. What happens then? Are we already seeing a new race for technology replacement? Let us be clear on one thing — nuclear weapons are multilateral in their reach and their devastation, whether we like it or not.

The pernicious capacity of the current inventory of nuclear weapons is beyond comprehension. It seems to us that, as others have pointed out, we have weapons chasing targets rather than targets requiring weapons. It is not new agenda thinking to engage in a debate over what might or might not be lower levels at which a deterrent might be maintained in the future. Our goal, which is consistent with our international obligations, is to work determinedly for their elimination altogether: no more, no less.

In taking the new agenda forward, we have been conscious that for too long it has been all too easy to dismiss calls for action as premature, unrealistic, counter-productive or impossible to achieve. We had the classic situation in which the perfect became the enemy of the good. We have also heard that there is no need for a new agenda. We regard this as disingenuous talk. The only agreed agenda that we know of that has currency consists of the elements set down in the NPT's principles and objectives. Our resolution incorporates and endorses that agenda.

The new agenda approach is qualitatively different, however. It calls for implementation of some practical measures that can be taken now and others that can be taken in the future. It advocates a step-by-step, progressive approach. It argues for mutually reinforcing steps. It does not attempt to put down deadlines. It confirms the call made in this Committee last week that disarmament is best achieved through practical, discrete, incremental steps.

The calls that this draft resolution makes are, we believe, realistic and achievable. We are seeking, therefore, to move the debate along a measured path, where the requisite confidence, productive engagement and outcomes can be delivered. It may not be a comfortable scenario for action — disarmament rarely is for those who possess the weapons.

Finally, allow me to highlight some of the changes we have made to this year's draft resolution. First, the text has been updated to take into account developments over the past year. Secondly, a number of refinements have been made to the preambular and operative paragraphs, taking into account constructive dialogue we have had in the last year with those countries keen to engage with us on substance.

This draft resolution — explicitly and deliberately — does not question the commitments to article VI of the NPT. It seeks only to accelerate the process leading to the fulfilment of these obligations. This is a very important distinction. The new agenda also endorses the need for the full implementation of the decisions and the resolution that came from the 1995 NPT Review Conference. In addition, this year's text endorses and welcomes the disarmament measures that are being taken, in addition to the START process. It also reinforces the Joint Statement by the United States and Russian Governments on the strategic importance of the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty, and it records the reality that all articles of the NPT are binding, as appropriate, on States parties at all times — an important imperative in addressing accountability.

Central to the new agenda approach — and it is articulated again this year in a new formulation — is a

determination that we need an "unequivocal undertaking" to speed up the process leading to elimination, and we are seeking to have this undertaking articulated at the highest political levels.

We urge all delegations to consider this draft resolution carefully and to join us in supporting it this year. We ask that delegations assess it for what it says, rather than for what it does not. The sponsors have always been ready to engage in dialogue on the substance of the text.

We do not claim that this is a novel or exhaustive agenda, for it is not. I want to make it clear also that it is not a hidden agenda, nor is it intended to be confrontational. We would be relaxed if some delegations wanted to call it a "renewed" agenda. More important, however, it encapsulates the elements that we consider should be part of a new push to move us forward towards eliminating nuclear weapons for all time. At a time when the process is stumbling, if not stalled altogether, it would be irresponsible if we failed to lift our game.

We have been told in this Committee that there is one road forward, and that we cannot bypass key milestones. We agree entirely with that view. Recent events reinforce the need for all of us to stay on the road and make sure that we are all travelling on the same road. But in making any journey, we must be clear about the objectives, how we are to get there and what is the best route. The new agenda does just that.

Mr. Guani (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): The delegation of Uruguay, on behalf of the countries of the Southern Cone Common Market (MERCOSUR) — Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay — and the associated countries, Bolivia and Chile, wishes to take this opportunity to stress the importance that we attach to adopting appropriate measures to regulate the international maritime transport of radioactive waste and spent nuclear fuels, in accordance with the highest international safety standards. This matter has particular reference to agenda item 76 (e), "Prohibition of the dumping of radioactive wastes".

Our interest stems from concern about the dangers to the health of the inhabitants, and to the marine environment, of the coastal and island States through whose region the wastes and spent fuel are transported.

We wish to reiterate the concept of the Joint Declaration made by the Foreign Ministers of Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Uruguay on 17 January 1997, which was circulated as an official document of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

We recognize that under the norms of international law and national legislation coastal States have jurisdiction over the protection and preservation of the marine environment in their exclusive economic zones, in order to prevent, reduce and monitor pollution. We support the strengthening, within the framework of the competent international bodies, of the regulation of the transport of radioactive material. This should include: guarantees of non-pollution of the marine environment; exchange of information on selected routes; a duty to inform coastal States of contingency plans for shipwrecks; and a commitment to recover radioactive wastes in the event of accidents aboard the ships transporting them and to pay compensation for loss and damage.

We particularly welcome the action taken by the Director General and Secretariat of the IAEA, under resolution GC(42)RES/13, approved at the forty-second session of the General Conference. This took the form not only of initiatives to promote closer cooperation between international organizations concerned with the safe transport of radioactive materials, but also of concrete acts, such as offering assistance to member States to strengthen their national regulations by applying the transport regulations, and, at the request of any member State, appraising the application of those regulations; establishing a Transport Safety Appraisal Service, which has already received a request from a member State; organizing training courses on the transport of radioactive materials, in the framework of five model regional projects for improving the protection infrastructure; and starting a programme of work on the possibility of simplifying and streamlining the transport regulations.

The most recent resolution on the matter, resolution GC(43)/RES/11, adopted by the forty-third General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency, recognized these initiatives, particularly the value of the Transport Safety Appraisal Service in obtaining the highest possible levels of safety in the transport of radioactive materials, and, in preambular paragraph f, recalled the invitation in resolution GC(42)/RES/13 to States shipping such materials to

> "provide, as appropriate, assurances to potentially affected States upon their request that their national regulations take into account the Agency's Transport Regulations and to provide them with relevant

information relating to shipments of radioactive materials."

Motivated by the need to protect the health and safety or our population and our environment, we believe that these efforts should continue, thus promoting the adoption of mechanisms that will provide sufficient guarantees to all the States concerned that the strictest safety measures will be applied in the international maritime transport of radioactive waste and spent nuclear fuel, and that any damage resulting from accidents in connection with such operations will be made good.

In this context, we wish to stress article 6, paragraph 4, regarding prior notification to and consent from the transit States, of the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal, as well as the International Maritime Organization Code governing the maritime transportation of nuclear fuel.

We would also like to place special emphasis on the language of the consensus in this year's report (A/54/42) of the Disarmament Commission, which, with respect to the "Establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among the States of the region concerned", states in paragraph 17:

> "Nuclear-weapon-free zones may also serve to promote cooperation aimed at ensuring that the regions concerned remain free of environmental pollution from radioactive wastes and other radioactive substances and, as appropriate, enforcing internationally agreed standards regulating international transportation of these substances."

We believe that the progress achieved will be mutually beneficial for coastal and island States as well as for States involved in the international maritime transportation of radioactive material, since it will allow for the establishment of coordination and the necessary precautions with regard to possible accidents. We are convinced that any progress will be appreciated by the international community when it comes to preventing such accidents.

Mr. Coutts (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): We associate ourselves with what the representative of Uruguay has just said on behalf of MERCOSUR, but we would like to refer to certain aspects of his statement because of the special importance we attach to the international maritime transportation of radioactive wastes and the prohibition on dumping such wastes. Chile, with its long coastline, archipelagos and important straits, is concerned because of the dangers such transportation poses to the health and marine environment of coastal and island transit States.

For this reason we have referred to this concern whenever possible and in all relevant forums, including the First Committee, since this matter affects international security. We will continue doing so, because we are convinced that it is necessary to keep the international community aware, in order to maintain progress in strengthening safety measures.

We believe that it is important to consider carefully the concern of island States, expressed in the general debate by the Dominican Republic, and by Jamaica, speaking on behalf of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM). The island States rely on agriculture, fishing and tourism, and therefore to a high degree on their fragile ecosystems.

For the island States, whether in the Caribbean or the Pacific, the international maritime transportation of radioactive waste and spent nuclear fuels is a real security threat, all the more serious because most of those potentially affected are small countries lacking the resources to cope with a crisis of such magnitude, caused by big countries and by technologies that those small countries do not control. Faced with the renewed growth of such transportation in 1999, the island countries have expressed their concern in various statements signed by the Governments of the Caribbean region and issued by the recent Pacific islands summit of the South Pacific Forum.

In conclusion, we continue to support the strengthening and implementation of the highest international standards governing the transportation of these materials, emphasizing in particular the need to exchange information in advance, in a timely manner, on the routes selected, contingency plans, recovery of waste and payment of compensation in the event of damage.

Mrs. Arce de Jeannet (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): It is an honour for the Mexican delegation to make this statement on behalf of the sponsors in introducing draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.23, entitled "Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty".

The preambular part indicates the dates of the adoption and signing of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and the date when the Preparatory Commission for the CTBT Organization was established; refers to decision 53/422, adopted during the fifty-third session; notes the number of States that have ratified the Treaty, with

emphasis on those whose signature and ratification are needed for its entry into force; and welcomes the convening of the Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, held in Vienna, Austria, from 6 to 8 October 1999.

By the operative part, the General Assembly would endorse the Final Declaration of the Conference; call upon all States to continue to support the Treaty; welcome the contributions States have made to ensure that the verification regime will be capable of meeting the Treaty requirements; and urge States to maintain their moratoriums on nuclear weapon test explosions or any other nuclear explosions.

The sponsors hope that the draft resolution will be adopted by consensus.

Mr. Seibert (Germany): Since I am taking the floor for the first time at this session, I should like to express my deep satisfaction at seeing you, Mr. Chairman, at the helm of the First Committee. Please be assured of the full cooperation and support of my delegation. It is gratifying to work with you in the Bureau as you conduct your important duties.

I have the honour to introduce on behalf of 50 sponsors draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.27, entitled "Objective information on military matters, including transparency of military expenditures". I take this opportunity to thank all the sponsors. Their growing number is encouraging and will, hopefully, translate into broader participation in the annual reporting.

The draft resolution has been developed in a joint effort by the delegations of Romania and Germany. I should like to express my sincere gratitude and appreciation to the delegation of Romania for its close and effective cooperation, which has become a good tradition.

While most concepts on transparency in military matters have been developed and implemented in a regional context, progress on the global level has been modest, and much remains to be done by the international community. Two global transparency measures have been adopted by United Nations Member States: the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms and the United Nations standardized reporting system on military expenditures.

While the Register reflects national data on arms exports and imports within seven specified categories of conventional weapons, the standardized reporting system on military expenditures gives a more general overview of national defence policies, in particular with respect to national spending on personnel, procurement, operating costs, research and development. My delegation wishes to underline the importance of universal adherence to both instruments, and appeals to all Member States to provide reports annually to the Secretary-General.

Germany remains committed to promoting transparency and confidence-building in both the global and the regional contexts. We are grateful to the delegation of the Netherlands for submitting a draft resolution on transparency in armaments, contained in document A/C.1/54/L.39, which particularly deals with the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. Germany has co-sponsored that draft resolution, and would welcome broad support by Member States.

Let me now turn to the draft resolution before us. The United Nations system for the standardized reporting of military expenditures is a significant contribution to international confidence-building in the field of military matters. We are aware, however, that the full potential of confidence-building can be developed only in conjunction with further political steps that require the steady, persistent and sometimes painstaking effort of the international community.

The United Nations system for the standardized reporting of military expenditures is an important contribution to this objective. It fully takes into account the different political conditions in each region. It has been acknowledged by all Member States several times, through the repeated adoption without a vote of previous resolutions under the same title.

These resolutions are recalled in the first and second preambular paragraphs of the draft resolution. In the third and fifth preambular paragraphs the draft resolution notes and welcomes the decision by many Member States to participate in the annual reporting. Regrettably, however, the participation by only 35 States last year continues to be disappointing, even if this is an increase over the previous year.

It was for this reason that resolution 52/32 called upon Member States to provide the Secretary-General with their views on ways and means to strengthen and broaden participation in the reporting system, including necessary changes to its content and structure. It also requested the Secretary-General to resume consultations with the relevant international bodies with a view to increased participation,

and to submit a report to the General Assembly on the outcome of these consultations, including appropriate recommendations.

The draft resolution takes up this request made by the General Assembly at its fifty-second session, and refers to the Secretary-General's reports, A/53/218 and A/54/298, and the recommendations contained therein.

By operative paragraphs 2 and 3 the General Assembly would welcome the continuation of consultations by the Secretary-General with relevant international bodies and express its appreciation for the submission of the aforementioned Secretary-General's reports, which contain, *inter alia*, practical recommendations on ways and means to enhance participation in the standardized reporting system — that is, to organize international and regional symposia and training seminars in the coming biennium, and to encourage, *inter alia*, the United Regional Centres for Peace and Disarmament in Africa, in Asia and the Pacific and in Latin America and the Caribbean to assist Member States in their regions in enhancing their knowledge of the standardized reporting system.

It is these recommendations that operative paragraphs 4, 5, 6 and 7 seek to implement. Operative paragraph 4 not only repeats the traditional call upon Member States to report annually, by 30 April, their military expenditures for the latest fiscal year for which data are available; it also gives more flexibility as to the reporting format, taking into account that many States report their military expenditures regularly to other international bodies or regional organizations. To facilitate reporting, operative paragraph 4, therefore, suggests that Member States might also use, as appropriate, other formats developed in conjunction with similar reporting in other international or regional contexts.

Operative paragraph 5 in turn encourages relevant international bodies and regional organizations to promote transparency of military expenditures and to enhance complementarity among reporting systems, while recognizing the different conditions prevailing in every single region, and to consider the possibility of an exchange of information with the United Nations.

Operative paragraph 6 requires the Secretary-General to assist Member States in the annual reporting by administrative measures which are also used with regard to the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, such as sending an annual note verbale together with appropriate technical instructions, and by promoting international and regional symposia and training seminars.

Operative paragraph 7 requests the Secretary-General to continue consultations with relevant international bodies, with a view to ascertaining the requirements for adjusting the present instruments to encourage wider participation. The emphasis is on examining possibilities to enhance complementarity among different reporting systems and to exchange related information.

Operative paragraph 8 requests the Secretary-General to submit the report to the fifty-fifth session of the General Assembly, with further recommendations based on the outcome of these recommendations and taking into the account the views of Member States, thus coming back to the biannual treatment of this complex topic in the General Assembly and providing sufficient time for action.

Since this approach depends to a large extent on the cooperation of Member States, paragraph 9 again calls upon Member States to provide the Secretary-General at the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly with their views on ways and means to strengthen and broaden participation, including necessary changes to the content and structure of the reporting system.

It must be our common goal to prevent this valuable instrument of confidence-building, which has always been unanimously agreed upon by the community of Member States, from being undermined through neglect, and thereby also to protect the credibility of General Assembly resolutions. Therefore, the operative part of the draft resolution stresses the need for further action and makes concrete suggestions.

Let me finally express our sincere hope that the community of member States will be able to adopt this draft resolution by consensus, as it has done in the case of similar draft resolutions in previous years.

Mr. Gorita (Romania): As I am taking the floor for the first time at this session, I would like to express our satisfaction at seeing you, Sir, in the chair of the Committee. You can be assured of the full support of my delegation in your work.

As in previous years, I have asked for the floor in order to address the issue of transparency in armaments, and more particularly on this occasion draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.27, entitled "Objective information on military matters, including transparency of military expenditures",

so ably introduced by the representative of Germany, Ambassador Günther Seibert, to whom we express our deep gratitude.

The issue of transparency in armaments is for Romania a small but necessary part of global confidence-building measures. We believe that increasing transparency in the military field could lead to greater confidence among States, in particular those belonging to the same region. Recent experience in different regions, including South-Eastern Europe, has underlined, in our view, that confidence remains essential to, and is an important requirement for, the maintenance of regional and international peace and stability.

Transparency also has an important role to play in preventing and reducing the excessive and destabilizing accumulation of armaments, an issue widely recognized as having a negative impact on emerging crises. Strengthening confidence-building activities through a better flow of objective military information could help to relieve regional and international tensions and prevent misunderstanding and miscalculations that might lead to irreversible confrontation.

This is why Romania thanks the delegation of the Netherlands for reintroducing the draft resolution on transparency in armaments, contained in document A/C.1/54/L.39, which deals particularly with the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. As in previous years, Romania has co-sponsored that draft resolution, and we appeal for the broadest possible support.

Let me now turn to the draft resolution on transparency of military expenditures. My country reaffirms its firm conviction that the United Nations standardized reporting system is an important instrument in reducing tensions regionally and world-wide. Increased transparency in the area of military budgets and openness in military affairs will enhance confidence among States, thereby providing an opportunity to reduce the risk of military confrontation.

Regrettably, although this measure of transparency and confidence-building has been in place for many years, only a small number of countries have provided information to be included in the reporting system. This is why we attach great importance to the call in operative paragraph 4 on all Member States of the United Nations to report annually, by 30 April, to the Secretary-General their military expenditures for the last fiscal year for which data are available.

As the reporting system is an effective tool for promoting peace, we believe that participation in it should be expanded. Taking into account the views expressed by different countries, the draft resolution now offers more flexibility as to the reporting format and supports enhancing cooperation between the United Nations and different international bodies and regional organizations which have developed similar instruments.

At the same time, Romania welcomes the resumption of consultations, initiated by the Secretary-General, aimed at ascertaining the requirements for adjusting the present reporting instrument with a view to enhancing the participation of Member States. We are grateful for the practical proposals presented by the Secretary-General, including the organization of international and regional symposia and training seminars in the coming biennium and encouraging the United Nations Regional Centres for Peace and Disarmament in Africa, in Asia and the Pacific, and in Latin America and the Caribbean, to assist Member States in their region to enhance knowledge of the standardized reporting system. This seems to be valuable and could receive enough support to be implemented.

Finally, I would like to thank the German delegation for excellent cooperation in this matter and all the sponsors of the draft resolution for their support. My delegation joins Ambassador Seibert's appeal that this draft resolution be adopted by consensus, as similar draft resolutions have been in previous years.

Mr. Hayashi (Japan): I wish to speak in support of the draft resolution on the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), in document A/C.1/54/L.23, introduced by the representative of Mexico. As one of the co-sponsors, my delegation, it goes without saying, allies itself with previous statements on the matter.

Let me take this opportunity to emphasize the importance that my country attaches to the early signature and ratification of the CTBT by all States as well as the cessation of nuclear tests pending its entry into force.

This position was exemplified earlier by our country's role as the Chair of the Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the CTBT, held in Vienna. We welcome the adoption of the Final Declaration and would like to emphasize the importance of sustaining the momentum generated by the Conference.

In accordance with the 1995 principles and objectives for nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament, the

international community successfully completed the negotiations on the CTBT in 1996. Now our immediate task is to realize its entry into force as soon as possible, together with the early conclusion of fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT) negotiations. It is all the more important since the NPT Review Conference will be held next year.

Last week the United States Senate made a negative decision with regard to the CTBT. The Government of Japan deeply regrets this action. We are also seriously concerned that this decision might send the wrong message to the world on the nuclear non-proliferation regime in general, and the significance of the Treaty in particular.

That is why our Government immediately after the Senate's action sent the State Secretary for Foreign Affairs to Washington to urge the highest levels of the United States Government and key congressional personalities to continue their efforts to bring about the early ratification of the Treaty, despite that setback. In addition, in a recent letter the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan called upon the Foreign Ministers of a number of States to accelerate the CTBT ratification process. On the other hand, we are encouraged by the position of the United States Government in continuing their efforts to secure ratification. My delegation welcomes the statement of the United States delegation to that effect.

The delay of ratification in one State, although regrettable, should not be used as a pretext to postpone the ratification process in others. The courage to take the lead in the right direction is strongly called for and will be deeply appreciated.

As there is a consensus of the global community on the need for a universal and total ban on nuclear testing, my delegation hopes that this draft resolution on the CTBT will be adopted by consensus.

Mr. Ogunbanwo (Nigeria): In the general debate in this Committee my delegation spoke about the need for the international community to agree on a new forward-looking agenda, suitable for the post-cold-war era and the new millennium.

My delegation would now like to clarify further what we mean by a new agenda. It must be comprehensive, not selective, and have two broad elements: renewed items and new items. By "renewed items", we mean items that relate to the long list of unresolved issues originating in the present millennium to be carried over to the new one. With regard to the new items on the new agenda, it is pertinent to point out that disarmament is not a static subject; it is constantly evolving and changing, because of new technologies or other developments. Our task is to identify which fall into this category.

If there are problems with the choice of the words "new agenda", my delegation has no difficulty in calling it the "future agenda". Whatever we call it, it cannot be based on complacency or an attitude of business as usual. As we prepare for the new millennium, there are new challenges to be faced and new roles to be assumed, which require an agenda with a new focus. In addition to the future agenda, our methods of dealing with disarmament and international security need to be reviewed if we are to meet the challenges of the twenty-first century.

As we begin to consider the future agenda, let us jointly set ourselves precise and realistic goals, bearing in mind that progress in disarmament, however modest or incremental, is still good for disarmament.

The question now is how best to achieve our future agenda goals. The answer lies in how we determine priorities and who determines those priorities. While we all have our national concerns and priorities, the best way forward is to look beyond national priorities and to consider priorities that take into account our collective interests.

We have opportunities for taking action. One such opportunity is the decision to be taken by this Committee regarding the convening of the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament (SSOD IV). SSOD IV could set universal goals and principles. We think that there is agreement on the notion of convening such a special session. What is required is for all States to display the spirit of cooperation, the flexibility and the political will needed to break the impasse reported to us by the Disarmament Commission. My delegation expects this Committee to resolve the issue.

Another opportunity will be the Millennium Summit, which is scheduled to open on 6 September 2000. Disarmament will be among the principal themes to be addressed in the report that the Secretary-General will be preparing for that Summit. Against the background of frustration and disappointment over the faltering pace of bilateral and multilateral disarmament, as well as the depressingly long list of unresolved disarmament issues, it is our hope that the Millennium Summit will come up with important and forward-looking pronouncements on disarmament, which has a very crucial role to play in our

struggle for a peaceful world — the paramount goal of mankind.

The final First Committee session of this millennium could also generate useful ideas from which the Millennium Summit could benefit. My delegation is pleased to note that civil society has been given the opportunity to make its own input, through the civil society Millennium Forum, to be held from 22 to 26 May 2000.

Mr. Khairat (Egypt): The delegation of Egypt has the honour to introduce, on behalf of the States members of the League of Arab States, the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/54/L.8, entitled "The risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East". In order to accommodate the concerns of many interested delegations, the draft was subject to intensive consultations, which led to its submission as it now appears. It is based on the draft resolution that the General Assembly adopted last year under the same agenda item.

Once again the draft resolution takes into account the prevailing realities in the Middle East region. These realities underline a basic fact in the Middle East: Israel remains the only State in the region that has not acceded to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), which is precisely what the seventh preambular paragraph objectively states. We are not engaging in name-calling, nor are we singling out anyone; we are simply making a statement of reality, expressed in a carefully measured and descriptive manner. We have used neutral language, stating an undeniable fact. Therefore, it is in no way subjective, no matter how hard Israel may try to argue otherwise.

As we stated in the general debate before this Committee, only one country in the Middle East is widely suspected of possessing a significant arsenal of nuclear weapons. Only one country in the Middle East operates unsafeguarded nuclear installations. Only one country in the Middle East refuses to adhere to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons or even to discuss the nuclear issue. Only one country in the Middle East refuses International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) full-scope safeguards.

Nonetheless, the reaction of the international community to this dangerous and provocative situation, with Israel at its root, remains — compared with other examples, though much less significant — mitigated and muted at best.

The achievement of universal adherence to the NPT remains a cardinal priority, not only for the Middle East region, but also for the international community as a whole. Universality consolidates the edifice of the NPT regime. This has been underscored by the Treaty itself and subsequently confirmed by the decision on principles and objectives for nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament adopted on 11 May 1995 by the Conference of States parties to the NPT, as well as in the provisions of the resolution on the Middle East adopted by the Conference by consensus. It is for these reasons that we regard Israel's refusal to accede to the NPT as impeding the realization of the objective of attaining universal adherence to the Treaty.

Needless to say, the continuation of such an imbalance and asymmetry between the legal obligations and commitments of the States of the Middle East cannot but further aggravate serious security concerns over the risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East and undermine the efforts of various regional and extra-regional parties to establish confidence-building measures, in particular those efforts aimed at the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East.

Regional parties that have renounced the nuclear option and acceded to the NPT as non-nuclear-weapon States are questioning the effect of that accession on their own national security. Has our accession, they ask, increased our security, especially when a nuclear threat continues to emanate from Israel? Arab States have delivered on and honoured their promises. Since 1995 all have acceded, leaving Israel as the only State that refuses to do so. It has not even declared an intention to do so. Moreover, it continues to refuse to place all its unsafeguarded nuclear materials and facilities under full-scope IAEA safeguards, as the draft resolution reflects.

A few years ago, as a token of our support for the collective efforts, the title of this item was changed from "Israeli nuclear armaments" to "The risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East". This change highlighted the conceptual change from confrontation to reconciliation and towards confidence-building. It is now Israel's turn to make a positive gesture by joining all States of the region in acceding to the NPT, the cornerstone of the non-proliferation regime.

Egypt, on behalf of the States members of the League of Arab States, hopes to receive the overwhelming support of member States for this draft resolution. Last year there were an unprecedented 158 votes in favour in direct support of our endeavours. This support came from Africa, Asia,

Europe, Latin America and elsewhere. We hope that this year's draft resolution will receive even more support. The consolidation of the non-proliferation regime is a solemn duty and sacred responsibility, which we should all work to achieve, without any exception or doubtful standards.

Mr. Grey (United States of America): I have asked for the floor today for two purposes.

First, I will address draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.1, "Preservation of and compliance with the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty", sponsored by the Russian Federation, Belarus and China. Secondly, I will provide clarification on United States intentions vis-à-vis its own traditional draft resolutions.

I particularly want to take this opportunity to respond to the 21 October statement by the Deputy Representative of the Russian Federation regarding draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.1. Many members of the Committee already know that the United States is deeply concerned by the draft resolution and the rationale offered to support it. There are certainly parts of the Russian Deputy Representative's statement with which the United States agrees. For example, the United States firmly believes that the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty remains a cornerstone of strategic stability and that it continues to provide the essential foundation for achieving further reductions in strategic offensive arms. Presidents Clinton and Yeltsin have repeatedly reaffirmed their commitment to the ABM Treaty and to continued efforts to strengthen it.

However, my Government takes strong exception to the Deputy Representative's statement that the draft resolution:

> "follows the mainstream of agreements between the Presidents of Russia and the United States, reached in Cologne in June 1999". (*A/C.1/PV.13*)

In our view, the draft resolution is inconsistent with the commitments made by Presidents Clinton and Yeltsin in Cologne.

The Russian Deputy Representative stated that the Cologne Joint Statement does not contain any agreement to review the ABM Treaty. He then went on to quote the language of the Joint Statement, which says:

> "both Parties affirm their existing obligations under Article XIII of the ABM Treaty to consider possible changes in the strategic situation that have a bearing on the ABM Treaty and, as appropriate, possible proposals for further increasing the viability of the Treaty." (*ibid.*)

What does this obligation in the ABM Treaty mean if it is not a commitment by the parties to review the Treaty in light of changes in the strategic situation?

The Cologne Joint Statement goes on to note that

> "Discussions on START III and the ABM Treaty will begin later this summer."

These discussions have in fact already begun. Several meetings with our Russian counterparts have already been held on START III and the ABM Treaty. In fact, after delivering his speech to the First Committee last Wednesday, 20 October, Under-Secretary of State (Designate) John Holum departed New York to travel to Moscow to continue discussions on the ABM Treaty and START III.

Finally, I take strong exception to the characterizations in the Deputy Representative's statement that the United States is seeking to "undermine" or "liquidate" the Treaty, or that any changes to its provisions "would deprive the Treaty of any sense."

Let me make it clear that the United States has not made a decision to deploy a limited national missile defence; such a decision will not be made until the year 2000 or later. In any case, we do not believe that the deployment of a limited national missile defence system would change the basic strategic calculus underlying the ABM Treaty or be incompatible with its central purpose, which is to maintain strategic stability and enable further reductions in strategic offensive arms.

Draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.1 appears to be based on the premise that adapting the ABM Treaty to meet the emerging threat posed by long-range ballistic missiles under development and testing by certain States necessarily means destroying the Treaty. Further, this also ignores the strong view of the United States that the adaptation we envisage would not threaten the stability of mutual United States-Russian deterrence.

In our ongoing discussions with Russia, there are shared common views, including the need for further reductions in offensive forces beyond START I and START II; the need for stability in our strategic relationship; and the need to preserve the ABM Treaty,

which provides stability and opens the way to further reductions.

We have made it clear to the Russian side that we want to work cooperatively on the issue of missile defence and the ABM Treaty as we also continue our discussions on START III. We believe our bilateral efforts are the only way to achieve success.

As I have noted, the process of discussion is well under way, and is continuing. The draft resolution on the ABM Treaty, however, seeks to prejudge this process and would undercut it. This is not in the interest of the United States, nor of Russia, nor of the world community, nor of anyone who wishes to see real progress on nuclear disarmament. The United States recognizes that the international community has an interest in the progress of bilateral arms control. At the same time, we do not believe it is appropriate for the General Assembly to be placed in the position of having to take sides in ongoing bilateral negotiations, or that the General Assembly can or should make judgements about specific substantive negotiating issues in such negotiations. Consequently, we continue to strongly urge Russia, Belarus and China to refrain from proceeding with their draft.

It is also with regret that I wish to inform the First Committee that the United States has decided not to pursue its two traditional draft resolutions, one on compliance with arms limitation and disarmament and non-proliferation agreements and one on bilateral nuclear arms negotiations and nuclear disarmament. Both, in our view, address important and relevant issues; both, in our view, would have been particularly timely this year. However, it appears that these two draft resolutions ran the risk of being subjected to a campaign of amendment designed to introduce contention over the ABM Treaty in every possible context. These draft resolutions have important points to make, and deserve better than to be treated in this way. As a result, the United States will not pursue them this year.

On compliance, we have submitted instead a draft decision, in document A/C.1/54/L.13, to keep the issue on the agenda, and we hope that the traditional consensus enjoyed by the compliance draft resolution will apply to the compliance draft decision.

Ms. Rovirosa (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): The delegation of Mexico has pleasure in introducing, on behalf of Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Uruguay and Venezuela, draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.24, under agenda item 82, "Consolidation of the regime established by the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (Treaty of Tlatelolco).

The priority that the Governments of Latin America and the Caribbean give to strengthening the regime prohibiting nuclear weapons established by the Treaty of Tlatelolco is confirmed by the large number of co-sponsors that are States parties to the Treaty and by two events in the past year: the ratification by the Government of Colombia and the ratification by the Government of Costa Rica of the amendments to the Treaty. The draft resolution contains a new preambular paragraph noting their ratification.

By the operative paragraphs of the draft resolution, the General Assembly would welcome steps taken by some countries of the region for the consolidation of the regime of military denuclearization established by the Treaty, and urge those countries of the region that have not yet done so to deposit their instruments of ratification of the amendments to the Treaty approved by the General Conference of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (OPANAL) in 1990, 1991 and 1992.

We hope that the draft resolution, supported by the signatory States of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, will, as similar draft resolutions have in previous years, receive the broadest possible support in the First Committee and be adopted without a vote.

Mr. Antonov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): At this year's session we see a continuation of the discussion initiated by the Russian Federation of an important and topical issue — the problem of information security. Recently this question has become even more relevant as a result of the qualitative new stage of the scientific and technological revolution, with a vertiginous rise in the introduction of new information technologies and means of telecommunication.

At the fifty-third session Russia for the first time took the initiative of introducing a draft resolution about developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security. That draft resolution won general support. It is our belief

that we are dealing with a fundamentally new situation which is arising in the world today.

Mankind is entering a qualitatively new phase of its development. The formation of a global information space, which is transforming information into a precious strategic resource, unquestionably opens up broad horizons for increasing the creative potential of mankind and presents favourable circumstances and conditions for the harmonious development of world civilization.

At the same time, the information revolution and progress in information technology entail a certain threat of the use of information advances for purposes inconsistent with the objectives of maintaining international peace and stability, compliance with the principles of the non-use of force, non-intervention in the internal affairs of States and respect for human rights and freedoms.

We believe this danger requires the adoption of preventive measures. There is now the threat of the appearance of a new area of possible confrontation in the international arena, which may provoke new forms of the arms race on the basis of the advances in the scientific and technological revolution, and ultimately divert tremendous amounts of resources which are so necessary for the purposes of peace and development in creative work.

On the other hand, the unprecedented level of information and the vulnerability of its infrastructure pose a real danger because of possible terrorist and criminal activities, which may well have extremely serious consequences.

The justification for this approach was demonstrated in particular in the course of interesting and useful discussions held within the framework of an event organized jointly by the United Nations Department for Disarmament and the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) in Geneva — an international meeting of experts on developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security. All the apprehensions about the matter lead us to the conclusion that the problem of international information security is now likely to become the subject of a careful and objective discussion within the framework of the United Nations.

Our new draft resolution, draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.4, which I am now introducing, confirms the topicality and significance of the problem of information security and calls for the further promotion at multilateral levels of the consideration of existing and potential threats in this field. The draft resolution is exclusively non-confrontational and covers the interests of a broad range of States. It notes the considerable progress in developing and applying the latest information technologies and their effect on the further development of civilization.

The operative part of the draft resolution contains an invitation to all States to continue to inform the Secretary-General of their views and assessments on a general appreciation of the issues of information security, defining basic notions related to information security and the advisability of developing international legal principles that would enhance the security of global information and telecommunications systems and help to combat information terrorism and criminality.

We think that this broad approach to the question will make it possible for all States to give consideration to all aspects of the problem as it exists at present. We believe that our proposed draft resolution should be adopted by consensus, as was last year's.

The meeting rose at 11.35 p.m.